

In the Claims

Please amend Claims 1-28. Amendments to the claims are indicated in the attached "Marked Up Version of Amendments" (pages i - vi).

*Sub C1*  
1. (Amended) A method for prioritizing a network management request sent by a management station to a managed element, comprising the steps of:

*Bi*  
assigning a priority value to the network management request dependent upon a requester identifier included in the request; and

scheduling the network management request, by the managed element dependent on the assigned priority value.

2. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the step of assigning is performed by the managed element.

*Sub C2*  
3. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 2 wherein the step of assigning further comprises the step of:

adding a priority value to an authentication group comprising user identifications, in an authentication table.

4. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 2 wherein the step of assigning further comprises the step of:

adding a priority value to a source identification in a source identification table.

5. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the step of scheduling further comprises the steps of:

extracting a user identification from the received network management request;  
and

determining the priority value by using the extracted user identification to index the authentication table.

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6. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 5 wherein the step of scheduling further comprises the step of:
- selecting the order of execution of the network management request dependent on the determined priority value.

7. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 6 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:
- preempting the currently executing task if the determined value for the management request is higher than the currently executing task.

8. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 6 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:
- adding the management request to the end of a request queue if the determined priority is lower than the priority of the tasks in the request queue.

9. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 6 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:
- adding the management request to the front of a request queue if the determined priority is higher than the priority of the tasks in the request queue.

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10. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the step of scheduling further comprises the step of:
- extracting the source identification from the network management request; and
- determining the priority value by using the extracted source identification to index the source identification table.

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11. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 10 wherein the step of scheduling further comprises the step of:
- selecting the order of execution of the network management request dependent on the determined priority value.

12. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 11 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:  
preempting a currently executing task if the determined value for the management request is higher than the currently executing task
13. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 11 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:  
adding the management request to the bottom of a request queue if the determined priority is lower than the priority of the tasks in the request queue.
14. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 11 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:  
adding the management request to the top of a request queue if the determined priority is higher than the priority of the tasks in the request queue.
15. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the step of assigning is performed by the management station.
16. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 15 wherein the step of assigning further comprises the step of:  
storing a priority value in the network management request before sending the network management request to the managed element.
17. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 16 wherein the step of scheduling further comprises the step of:  
extracting the priority value from the network management request; and  
scheduling the network management request dependent on the extracted priority value.

- Sub 4 18. (Amended) An apparatus for prioritizing a network management request sent by a management station to a managed element, comprising:
- a priority assignment routine which assigns a priority value to the network management request dependent upon a requester identifier included in the request; and
  - a network management request routine which schedules the network management request in the managed element dependent on the assigned priority value.
- B1 19. (Amended) The apparatus as claimed in Claim 18 wherein the assignment routine is located in the managed element.
- Sub 5 20. (Amended) The apparatus as claimed in Claim 19 wherein the priority assignment routine further comprises:
- a priority value assignment routine which adds a priority value to an authentication group comprising user identifications, in an authentication table.
21. (Amended) The apparatus as claimed in Claim 20 wherein the network management routine further comprises:
- a user identification extraction routine which extracts a user identification from the network management request; and
  - a priority value extraction routine which determines the priority value by using the extracted user identification to index the authentication table.
22. (Amended) The apparatus as claimed in Claim 19 wherein the priority value assignment routine further comprises:
- a priority value assignment routine which adds a priority value to a source identification in a source identification table.
23. (Amended) The apparatus as claimed in Claim 22 wherein the network management routine further comprises:

CS a source identification extraction routine which extracts the source identification from the network management request; and

a priority value determination routine which determines the priority value using the extracted source identification to index the source identification table.

24. (Amended) The apparatus as claimed in Claim 18 wherein the assignment routine is located in management station.

B1 25. (Amended) The apparatus as claimed in Claim 22 wherein the assignment routine further comprises:

a priority value assignment routine which stores a priority value in the network management request before sending the network management request to the managed element.

26. (Amended) The apparatus as claimed in Claim 25 wherein network management routine further comprises:

a priority extraction routine which extracts the priority value from the network management request; and

a request scheduling routine which schedules the network management request dependent on the extracted priority value.

Sub 27. (Amended) An apparatus for prioritizing a network management request sent by a management station to a managed element, comprising:

a priority assignment routine;

a network management request scheduler;

means, within the priority assignment routine, for assigning a priority value to the network management request dependent upon a requester identifier included in the network management request; and